

Title I and Homelessness

Who is homeless? (Sec. 725)

The term “homeless children and youth”–

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence ...; and

(B) includes–

- (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings ...
- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

This document was collaboratively developed by:

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEH CY)–512-475-8765–
www.naehcy.org

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)–800-308-2145–
www.serve.org/nche

National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH)–202-737-6444 ext. 18–
www.nationalhomeless.org

National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP)–202-638-2535–
www.nlchp.org

National Network for Youth (NN4Y)–
202-783-7949–www.NN4Youth.org

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B–Education for Homeless Children and Youth), reauthorized in January 2002, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This brief explains the legislation and offers strategies for implementing it in a school district. Additional briefs on various topics in the law may be found on the websites of the organizations listed below.

Key Provisions in Title I Relating to Homelessness

- ☐ A child or youth who is homeless and is attending any school in the district is automatically eligible for Title I services, regardless of their current academic performance.
- ☐ Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), otherwise known as school districts, must reserve (or set aside) funds as are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to children in Title I, Part A, funded schools to serve homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live.
- ☐ An LEA may receive funding under Title I, Part A, only if the LEA has on file with the State Educational Agency (SEA) a plan, approved by the SEA, that is coordinated with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- ☐ Each LEA Title I plan must include a description of the services that will be provided to homeless children, including services provided with funds from the Reservation of Funds set-aside.
- ☐ Any state desiring to receive funding under Title I, Part A, must submit a plan to the Secretary that is coordinated with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

(See Endnotes for the text of the law.)

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) targets those students most at risk of failing in school. Among students at risk of school failure are children and youth experiencing homelessness. Children and youth who are homeless are more likely to miss school and to change schools than are other children and youth; they are, therefore, at higher risk of educational failure.

Children and youth in homeless situations benefit from Title I services and programs. However, additional Title I funds may be needed to address specific needs of children who are homeless or highly mobile. For example, an excellent reading program implemented in a Schoolwide school or Targeted Assistance school will not be effective for children and youth who are unable to attend school regularly. In this instance, an appropriate expenditure of Title I funds would be to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance, such as providing transportation to school. Set-aside funds should support children

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and youth experiencing homelessness in non-Title I participating schools and those in participating schools who need additional support outside of school, including students living in shelters, motels, transitional living programs, and other locations.

The ESEA requires a state plan that demonstrates coordination between Title I and the McKinney-Vento Act. Coordination of services results in the most effective use of resources, ensuring that the needs of students experiencing homelessness are addressed in a comprehensive and integrated fashion. LEA homeless liaisons, now required to be appointed in every school district, and district Title I coordinators must communicate and collaborate on an ongoing basis to identify the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness, review resources, and plan ways to address needs. Collaboration results in a “win-win” situation: students in homeless situations achieve to high standards, and student achievement in the district increases as a whole.

Strategies for Using Title I Funds to Serve Students Experiencing Homelessness

- ☐ Establish a formula to allocate Title I set-asides for homeless children and youth. Contact NCHE for sample formulas.
- ☐ Use Title I funds (including set-aside funds) to support the position of a full-time LEA homeless liaison so that the liaison’s duties can be more fully accomplished.
- ☐ Use Title I funds to meet basic needs of students experiencing homelessness (transportation to school, clothing, supplies, health) so that they may participate more fully in school.
- ☐ Use Title I funds to hire special teachers, aides, and tutors to provide supplemental instruction to students at risk of school failure, including students experiencing homelessness, on reading and math as a supplement to regular classroom instruction.
- ☐ Use Title I funds for parent involvement that makes a special effort to reach out to parents in homeless situations.
- ☐ Use set-aside funds for after-school and/or summer programs.
- ☐ Use set-aside funds for outreach services to children and youth living in shelters, transitional living programs, motels, and other temporary residences.
- ☐ Use Title I funds for research-based programs that benefit highly mobile students.
- ☐ Collect data on students experiencing homelessness as part of the overall districtwide data collection system.
- ☐ Pool Title I and McKinney-Vento funds to provide a comprehensive program for children at risk of failure, ensuring that specific needs of children experiencing homelessness or high mobility are met.

Endnotes

“State Plans—

- (a) *Plans Required.—(1) In General.—Any State desiring to receive a grant under this part shall submit to the Secretary a plan, developed in consultation with local educational agencies, teachers, principals, pupil services personnel, administrators (including administrators of programs described in other parts of this title), other staff, and parents, that satisfies the requirements of this section and that is coordinated with other programs under this Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998, the Head Start Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.”*

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Sec. 1111(a)(1); 20 U.S.C. 6311(a)(1)

“Local Educational Agency Plans—

- (a) *Plans Required.—(1) Subgrants.—A local educational agency may receive a subgrant under this part for any fiscal year only if such agency has on file with the State educational agency a plan, approved by the State educational agency, that is coordinated with other programs under this Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and other Acts, as appropriate...*
- (b) *Plan Provisions.—(1) In General.—In order to help low-achieving children meet challenging achievement academic standards, each local educational agency plan shall include...*
- (E) *a description of how the local educational agency will coordinate and integrate services provided under this part with other educational services at the local educational agency or individual school level, such as ...*
- (ii) *services for children with limited English proficiency, children with disabilities, migratory children, neglected or delinquent youth, Indian children served under part A of title VII, homeless children, and immigrant children in order to increase program effectiveness,*

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Strategies to Facilitate Collaboration and Coordination between Title I and McKinney-Vento

- ☐ Ensure that LEA homeless liaisons attend Title I conferences and in-services and that Title I coordinators attend homeless education conferences and in-services.
- ☐ Ensure collaboration between local Title I coordinators and LEA homeless liaisons on a local plan that identifies ways that Title I will serve children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- ☐ Ensure collaboration between the state Title I coordinator and the state McKinney-Vento coordinator on the state Title I plan or the state consolidated plan.
- ☐ Share Title I and Homeless Education handbooks with each program.
- ☐ Collect and share across the district concrete data on the needs of homeless children and youth.
- ☐ Involve Title I coordinators in structured coalition-building with homeless education programs and organizations that serve homeless families and unaccompanied homeless youth, and establish common goals.
- ☐ Initiate district efforts to make organizational accommodations for homeless children and youth as necessary in such areas as transportation, remaining in the school of origin, records transfer, class scheduling, and special services that will help them enroll, attend, and succeed in school.
- ☐ Involve homeless education program staff in school improvement issues; make sure that addressing the needs of highly mobile students is included in the school improvement plans—not addressed as a separate issue.
- ☐ Co-locate Title I and homeless education programs.
- ☐ Emphasize that coordination and sharing of resources is beneficial to the district as a whole because serving homeless children and youth will increase school achievement, lower truancy and dropout rates, and increase overall funding to the district.
- ☐ Determine what funding is available to serve homeless children and youth and how it is being used. Identify needs and develop a cross-program approach to address unmet needs.
- ☐ Establish and widely disseminate information on districtwide policies, procedures, and guidelines to identify and serve homeless children and youth.
- ☐ Ensure LEA homeless liaison representation on the Committee of Practitioners.
- ☐ Include homeless parents in Title I parental involvement policies and create opportunities for homeless parents to be involved.

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eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program;...

(O) *a description of the services the local educational agency will provide homeless children, including services provided with funds reserved under Section 1113(c)(3)(A);*

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Sec. 1112; 20 U.S.C. 6312

“Eligible School Attendance Areas—

(c) Allocations— ... (3) Reservation—A local educational agency shall reserve such funds as are necessary under this part to provide services comparable to those provided to children in schools funded under this part to serve—(A) homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live;”

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Sec. 1113(c)(3)(A); 20 U.S.C. 6313(c)(3)(A)

“Targeted Assistance Schools —

(b) Eligible Children— ... (2) Children Included—(E) Homeless Children.—A child who is homeless and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for services under this part.”

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Sec. 1115(b)(2)(E); 20 U.S.C. 6315(b)(2)(E)

Every state is required to have a coordinator for the education of homeless children and youth, and every school district is required to have a liaison for homeless students. These individuals will assist you with the implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act. To find out who your state coordinator is, visit the NCHE website at www.serve.org/nche.



For further information on the McKinney-Vento Act and resources for implementation, call the NCHE HelpLine at 800-308-2145 or e-mail homeless@serve.org.

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